

**MILLSTONE TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 23, 2020**

Chairman Scott called the Meeting to Order at 7:26 p.m.

Due to the Covid 19 Crisis and the Executive Order from the Governor, we are holding this meeting by electronic means. The door is open should the public wish to attend and comply with the social distancing procedure that has been put in place, including the donning of masks with a limit of ten persons.

The Adequate Meeting Notice was read.

Roll Call: Present: Blackwell, Butch, Butewicz, Datello, Grbelja, Madeam, Morelli, Oxley, Scott, Smith and Riggin (late 7:45 p.m.)

Chairman Scott opened the meeting to the public for the comment at 7:30 p.m. Ms. D'Andrea announced that no one from the public was in attendance. Chairman Scott then closed the public comment portion.

Approval of the February 27, 2020 Meeting Minutes. Ms. D'Andrea advised that was one correction and announced what that was.

Ms. Butewicz made the Motion to approve the meeting minutes and Deputy Mayor Grbelja offered a Second. Roll Call Vote: Butewicz, Grbelja, Blackwell, Butch, Morelli and Oxley voted yes to approve.

OLD BUSINESS:

Monmouth County Municipal Open Space Grant #14-12: Millstone Park Phase 1 Development.

Recreation has asked the Open Space Council to write a letter supporting the grant application for Phase II of the grant.

All members are in agreement with sending the letter.

Park Guide. Deputy Mayor Grbelja explained that the grant will allow a more robust, well-rounded use of the park. She stated that the Historic Preservation Commission would like to list some of the historic sites in the park guide. Since the Covid 19 outbreak the Commission has not had an opportunity to meet again to discuss further.

Ms. Oxley asked if there was a date slated for the Opening of Millstone Park. Ms. Butch explained that the turf has not developed enough to use the fields and she explained that they are checking the root system. Ms. Butch reported that they are

looking to the fall to open the Park.

Spring Newsletter. Ms. Oxley stated that Ms. Peerboom had sent out an email reminder to everyone. Deputy Mayor Grbelja wrote her article about coyotes and sent it in already. The group discussed finding a photo of a coyote to accompany the article.

Chairman Scott is working on her article.

Ms. Butewicz will write an article about the Trapani bees and their honey. She will write this article for the fall newsletter.

Events. Chairman Scott advised that there will not a clam bake this year and she will address that under Fundraising on the Agenda but since there will not be an advertisement for the clam bake there will be additional space in the newsletter.

The members should put together a list of topics they wish to cover in the newsletter and chose their topic and commit to write the article and send to Ms. Peerboom.

Park Ordinance. The Park Ordinances tht were prepared were discussed. Ms. Butch had emailed the ordinances to Ms. D'Andrea this date but they were not forwarded to the members. Ms. D'Andrea will have them forwarded them tomorrow.

Ms. Butch explained that Mr. DeFelice wrote an ordinance that just relates to Millstone Park, Mr. Specht's is broader. Ms. Butch advised that the Town does not want to open Millstone Park without having an Ordinance in place.

Once the members receive a copy of both proposed ordinances, they can provide feedback by email.

NEW BUSINESS:

Memorial Tree and Bench Program. Ms. Butch explained that the program will allow individuals to purchase a tree to have it planted in memory of someone who has passed on. A plaque of the dedication will be planted at the base of the tree. Costs must be worked out. The Township is not responsible for the costs, those would be borne by the donor. There would be a tree planting plan so that trees are not just arbitrarily planted anywhere.

Bench program was discussed. The benches would flow the same premise as the tree program. Benches would be located along the trails. Ms. Butch clarified that the trails are multi-faceted for walking, jogging, horseback riding and bicycling. There are fitness areas along the trails. Folks can relax along the trails on the benches. The placement of the benches was discussed.

Ms. Butch stated that this program is for the public. The trees will be paid for by the

public including benches. This program presently will be for only Millstone Park.

Peplowski. Block 35, Lot 11; 8.94 acres on Stage Coach Road Scott advised that the latest letter was received April 17, 2020 anticipating the acquisition of the farm. She advised that they are looking for our contribution. Ms. Butch stated that the County is purchasing the right of way directly from Mr. Peplowski. Mr. Peplowski will not get paid for the non-severable portion of the property that will be used for a farm market.

Chairman Scott has tried to contact Ms. Honegfeld from the MCADB but she has not received a response. She will follow-up.

Mr. Blackwell has reviewed the horse trail portion of the park ordinance. He will clean-up some of the redundancies. He will email Ms. D'Andrea that clean-up portion.

Events – Clam Bake. Chairman Scott provide the reasons that the clam bake will not be taking place this year, including the increased costs of the sea food and most recently, the Covid 19 situation. She offered that due to the virus situation, the event may not be able to move forward. We will wait until next year.

Letters will be sent to the sponsors thanking them and explaining our situation.

Ms. D'Andrea will send out the letters after Chairman Scott has reviewed.

Finance. Deputy Mayor Grbelja stated that there are not too many expenditures currently because some of the farmland preservations have not gone through fruition. She explained that the comps are too low at this time. She did offer that as soon as the amounts of property purchased along Route 33 becomes public information, the comps will come up and that will make a difference.

Grant writing - Ms. Butch stated that the Township will apply for a Community Block Development Grant (CDBG) for Millstone Park for the development of a challenge playground for able bodied and challenged children. She advised that the grant is due in June and is 100% funded.

Legislative awareness. Ms. Butch advised that due to Covid19, they have tabled the concern over plastic bags. at this point in time due to the virus, plastic bags are being used to transport goods.

The group discussed some of the areas being impacted by the virus such as pumpkin farms for pumpkin picking and blueberry picking and peach picking. Tulip season was impacted as well. Ms. Butch advised that it is very difficult trying to get labor in to pick the fruit.

Stewardship. Chairman Stewart stated that they are looking to steward 5 properties to include using the drone, on horseback, walking and using the gator. Ms. D'Andrea will

provide 5 properties and send out the letters to surrounding property owners.

Planning Board and Board of Adjustment review. Deputy Mayor Grbelja has nothing to report at this time. She did apprise the group that on April 7th, the Township went before the Judge for the Affordable Housing matter and the result was the approval of our third-round plan. She advised that we are protected from builders' remedy and have immunity until 2025. She offered that the Judge commended the Township on perfecting their plan in a timely manner.

Public Relations. Everyone will get their articles to Melissa to get the Spring Newsletter out.

Education. Chairman Scott explained that the Land Rally was cancelled due to the Covid 19 virus and there are no educational opportunities at this time.

There has been no public at the meeting this evening.

At 8:15 p.m., Chairman Scott made a Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss potential purchases. Ms. Oxley offered a Second and by unanimous vote the Council left the Regular Session and entered into the Executive Session

At 8:30 p.m. The Council returned to the Regular Meeting.

Seeing no further business, Ms. Butch made a Motion to Adjourn and Chairman Scott offered a Second Adjourn and by unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

